

Torrance, California
December 26, 1945

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF TORRANCE

The City Council of the City of Torrance convened in a Regular Meeting in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Torrance, California, on Wednesday, December 26, 1945 at 7:45 P.M.

Mayor Tolson called the meeting to order.

Clerk Bartlett called the roll, those answering present being Councilmen Cucci, Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. Absent: Councilmen: None.

All those present in the Council Chamber Saluted the Flag.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the minutes of an Adjourned Regular Meeting held December 18, 1945 be approved as written. Councilman Gilbert seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

A resolution, approved and adopted on the 17th day of December, 1945 by the Torrance Chamber of Commerce, was presented, relative to the proposed participation by City Employees in the State Employees' Retirement System, and endorsing such participation.

Councilman Hitchcock advised that he believed the Chamber of Commerce is of the impression that the proposition will be placed on the ballot at the next general election, and that he felt the Chamber should be informed that the petitions recently circulated and signed, which signed petitions were presented at the December 18, 1945 meeting, called for adoption of the system by the City Council, rather than calling for placing of the proposition on the ballot to be voted on by the electorate.

Councilman Powell brought up the matter of method of repeal of the system, stating that Deputy City Attorney Willett had informed at the December 18, 1945 meeting that, if the system is adopted by the present City Council, it can be repealed by, and only by, a vote of the electorate, and not by a subsequent City

Council. Attorney McCall said he and Attorney Willett had conferred in this matter and were both of the opinion given by Attorney Willett.

Mr. Plomert, speaking for the Chamber of Commerce, said it had definitely been the understanding of the Chamber, when asked to endorse the plan, that it would be placed on the ballot at the next general election. He contended that the Plan is sound enough that it should be presented to the electorate with confidence. He expressed surprise at the latest information given relative to method of repeal, advising he had been of the impression that the plan could be repealed by succeeding Councils.

Councilman Powell said the Council had also been of this impression based on information given by the State representative who explained the plan. However, he said, the law is specific in the statement that it can be repealed only by a vote of the people, regardless of whether it is adopted by the City Council or by the electorate.

Councilman Hitchcock said he thought the Chamber of Commerce should be notified that it was the intention of the signers of the petitions that the plan be adopted by the City Council. Councilman Powell said that, undoubtedly, the Chamber had been of the same impression the Council had been of relative to method of repeal, which would explain their attitude relative to method of adoption. He said that the 1700 signatures on the petitions represents a great number of people of the City, and that he felt the plan should be adopted by the Council.

Councilman Gilbert pointed out that it is not known how many of the 1700 signatures are signatures of registered voters, which should be given some consideration.

After a few minutes of discussion, Councilman Powell asked Attorney McCall to advise what the next step should be for the Council to adopt the Plan. Attorney McCall called upon Attorney Willett to answer this question, advising that Attorney Willett had done a great deal of research work on this matter in the absence of Attorney McCall.

Attorney Willett advised, first, that there exists a question as to whether or not the actuary survey made over a year ago is still in effect. He said, however, that he believed there had been a statement made by the State representative that the actuary survey can be revived and revised and used at this time, eliminating the necessity of waiting another entire year for a re-survey. He said, if this is true, the next step is for the Council to instruct the City Attorney to prepare a Resolution of Intention to pass an ordinance to adopt the State Retirement Plan.

Relative to method of repeal, he said that, according to Act 5236 of the General Laws, whether the plan is adopted by the City Council or by the electorate, it can only be repealed by a vote of the people. However, he said, Act 5847, which sets up the State Employees Retirement System, and which is the system with which the City will, if the plan is adopted, contract, provides that the plan can be repealed by the City Council one year after adoption. He named persons he has discussed this matter with, which persons are qualified to render authoritative opinions in this specific matter, and said they had been of the impression that Act 5236 would prevail, although there has never been any litigation whatsoever to substantiate this, since there has never been an attempt made by any Council to rescind the plan once it has been adopted by a City Council. Therefore, he said, in his opinion also, Act 5236, an enabling Act, would prevail and the plan, if adopted by this Council, could only be repealed by a vote of the people.

Clerk Bartlett advised that an error was made when the signatures on the petitions were tallied, and that the total to date, including a petition received since the last meeting, is 1511 signatures.

Councilman Cucci moved that the City Attorney be instructed to prepare a Resolution of Intention to adopt an Ordinance to adopt the State Retirement System for City Employees, in accordance with Act 5236 of the General Laws of the State of California. Councilman Powell seconded the motion.

Councilman Gilbert requested permission to make a statement before a vote is taken on this motion, advising that he has been,

and is still of the impression that the matter can easily become a "political football" if adopted in this manner, indicating that he would prefer having it voted upon by the people and thus eliminate the possibility of the issue being used in the future by unscrupulous politicians to further their own interests, all of which would create an insufferable condition for City Employees who could possibly be made the unfortunate victims of political whimsy. He said he would prefer to decline voting on this issue when it is put to a vote.

Councilman Cucci said he, Councilman Gilbert, would have to vote one way or the other on the matter, and that, in any event, this is not the final action, as it will come up again when the resolution is adopted, and when the ordinance is presented. He said this action simply instructs the City Attorney to draw up the Resolution of Intention to adopt an Ordinance to adopt the Plan, and is not final or binding in any way whatsoever.

A roll call vote was taken upon the motion, which motion was carried by the following vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: Gilbert. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

A communication was read from J. E. McCall, City Attorney, handing to the Council his entire file showing everything done by him in Washington, D. C. to secure for the City of Torrance the airfield known as the "Lomita Flight Strip". He called particular attention to his letter of December 6 addressed to Mr. Thomas H. MacDonal, Commissioner of Public Roads, Interior Building, North, Washington, D. C., and his letter of December 4 to the Surplus Property Administrator, requesting the Council to advise if either of these letters contain any representation or commitment in which the Council does not concur.

The communication above referred to, addressed to Mr. Thomas H. MacDonal, was read in full submitting a request to the Air Strip Branch of the Commissioner of Public Roads for consideration of the application of the City of Torrance for the acquisition of the Lomita Flight Strip, and advising what the City's intentions are for improvements to the existing facilities.

The other communication above referred to, addressed to the Surplus Property Administrator, was read in full, being also a request for consideration of the application of the City for the acquisition of the Flight Strip, and advising that it is the desire of the City to acquire this strip in order to have a municipal airport in conformity to the master plan of the Regional Planning Commission of the City of Los Angeles, and serve a public utility need for the community.

Attorney McCall advised verbally that the City has received no commitment from the Federal Government, nor does the City have a deed to this Airport, and recommended that the Council put forth every effort to acquire the Strip, as, he said, it will be worth many hundreds of thousands of dollars to the City if acquired.

Mayor Tolson advised that every effort is being made to acquire the Strip, and that some word should be received soon from the Federal Government in connection with same.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the entire file submitted by Attorney McCall in connection with the Lomita Flight Strip matter be placed on file in the office of the City Clerk for reference. Councilman Gilbert seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Councilman Hitchcock suggested that Attorney McCall be asked to serve on the newly formed Aviation Committee, Mayor Tolson replying that he had already requested Attorney McCall to attend the meetings. Mayor Tolson advised that the important matter of zoning of the Airport had already been brought up by the Committee, and asked Engineer Jain to explain the details of the Question.

Engineer Jain reported that, at the present time, the vicinity is zoned for light agriculture, which permits airports and landing fields, but not the industries incidental to an airport. He said that, after much discussion, it has been decided that neither M-1 (light manufacturing) or M-2 (heavy manufacturing) would be the proper zones, as M-1 is not flexible enough to allow the industries incidental to an airport, and M-2 allows certain heavy manufacturing businesses which would be objectionable to the surrounding area. He said it had been suggested that a distinct zone be named for airports,

describing and including all the industries which ordinarily go with airports, and that this airport be rezoned accordingly. This would amount to establishing a new type of zone altogether, he said, to take care of the airport question. He said this action should be initiated by the Council, and that, since it could be the determining factor either for or against the City in its application for acquisition of the Airport, he recommended that immediate steps be taken to begin necessary action to rezone the airport.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the Planning Commission be authorized to proceed immediately to recommend rezoning of the Lomita Flight Strip, to recommend the proper type of zone applicable to airports, and to further recommend the industries and businesses which should be allowed to be established in the vicinity. Councilman Gilbert seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Councilman Powell read a communication addressed to Fire Chief McMaster from the Navy Material Redistribution Center, requesting the City to replace thirteen all-weather fire hydrants located on Navy property at the Redistribution Center with California type hydrants.

Councilman Powell then read a communication from J. E. McMaster, Chief of the Fire Department, advising that, to his knowledge, the City has never installed fire hydrants on private property.

It was suggested that, since the streets in the vicinity of the Redistribution Center are closed to the public, and since the property is Navy property, that the Federal Government should install the necessary hydrants.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the matter be referred to the entire City Council, the City Attorney, City Engineer, Fire Chief and Water Manager for study and recommendation. Councilman Cucci seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Councilman Cucci moved that, in compliance with a recommendation of Engineer Jain, two high school boys be employed as helpers in the repair of plaster work on City buildings, for one day only, at laborer's rates. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci, Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Cucci moved that the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, Torrance Post No. 3251, be granted free use of the Civic Auditorium on Friday nights for a period of one month, a request having been received and read at the December 18, 1945 meeting for use of the building on Friday nights, for the purpose of holding dances, with the understanding that the City reserves the right to cancel the reservation on any Friday night when and if it is ever deemed necessary. Councilman Gilbert seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci, Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Gilbert moved that all the recommendations made by Mr. C. Z. Ward, Manager of Torrance Municipal Bus Lines, which were read and recorded in the minutes of the meeting of December 18, 1945, be concurred in. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion.

This motion met with strong opposition from Councilmen Powell and Cucci, who both particularly emphasized the fact that they felt one recommendation, i.e. the one whereby Mr. Ward recommended abolishment of the position of Dispatcher, a job held by Mr. A. E. Treloar, was made for vindictive and personal reasons, rather than in the interest of economy and good management as was claimed by Mr. Ward. They both pointed out that Mr. Treloar had rendered a splendid service to the public while acting in the capacity of Dispatcher, which involved seeing that busses started runs on time and other duties incidental to the efficient and smooth operation of the line.

Councilman Powell said that he understood there is a letter on file with the Civil Service Board, from Mr. Ward, requesting that the position of Dispatcher be established. He said he questioned the legality of abolishing the position at this time, since it was requested by the Bus Manager.

Councilman Gilbert replied that there was a letter directed to the Civil Service Board requesting the position to be established, but that he did not know whether or not this had been done officially. In any event, he continued, if, through trial, it has been determined that the position of dispatcher is of no benefit to the department, he felt the Council could legally abolish it, as, he added, many of the positions so created are considered to be temporary positions. That the dispatcher is performing his duties efficiently, he said, he does not question, and pointed out that the position itself is wherein the fault lies, and not with the individual who performs the work. He reiterated his remarks made at the December 18, 1945 meeting that the Council should give Mr. Ward full cooperation in the management of the Bus Lines if it is ever to be expected that a good, businesslike department is to be maintained.

Councilman Powell commented that, in connection with the claim of Mr. Ward that no improvement in the service of the Bus Lines commensurate with the amount of salary paid the Dispatcher for his services had been evidenced, the high salary was earned by many hours of overtime devoted to his work, and that the service rendered to the public as a result of his untiring efforts is worth the amount paid him. He said if the Council wanted to render a good service to the public, it should abolish the position of Bus Manager, rather than the position of Dispatcher, as, he said, Mr. Treloar had practically directed the operations of the Bus Lines since he assumed the position of Dispatcher.

Councilman Gilbert repeated that he did not say Mr. Treloar had been overpaid, nor did he say he had not done a good job. He said he could see no reason, however, why the duties performed by the dispatcher could not be performed by Mr. Ward and his office, rather than paying extra money for the service. He said there is no point in paying a Manager to perform these various duties and then adding to the expense of the bus lines by paying extra money for performance of duties the manager is capable of doing, and in a position to do.

Councilman Cucci said he had been responsible for there being a dispatcher, which he had felt was necessary due to the fact that there had been a serious leakage of gasoline in the Bus Department. He added that the benefit to the department should not be measured in dollars and cents, but in service rendered to the public, which, he said, had been excellent. He continued by saying that the dispatcher had brought about punctuality in the transportation line, replacing the old system of "catch as catch can", and errors and slipshod methods which were never heard about until Mr. Treloar began policing the line and keeping track of the drivers and watching the arrival and departing hours of the line. If, he said, in the performance of his duties, Mr. Treloar had been required to work a great deal of overtime, the extra convenience afforded the public had been well worth the time and money expended. Further, he said, the mere fact that Mr. Ward had recommended certain things does not mean that the Council should concur wholly in them and added that some of the recommendations made, such as added service to Los Angeles, and other matters, are good. He said if Mr. Ward is interested in increasing the revenue of the Bus Lines, he should devote his energy and time toward arranging new schedules and added service to various points, such as the route to Watteria, via Redondo Beach. He said he objected strenuously to returning to the old system of operating the line with no organization or system.

A roll call vote was taken upon Councilman Gilbert's motion to concur in all the recommendations made by Mr. Ward, which motion was carried by the following vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Gilbert, Hitchcock and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci and Powell. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

To Councilman Cucci's attempt to reopen the discussion, Mayor Tolson declared that a vote had been taken on the motion, and that there is no object to continued debate, since it is a controversial issue upon which there is no hope of full Councilmanic agreement.

At this point, Councilman Cucci, addressing Mayor Tolson, retorted that he, Mayor Tolson, apparently thought himself capable enough to run the line himself, and that he, Councilman Cucci, therefore would resign his position as Chairman of the Bus Department Committee, effective immediately. Mayor Tolson replied that Councilman

Cucci had asked for the Chairmanship of the Committee voluntarily, and that he is resigning of his own volition.

Councilman Gilbert moved that the voluntary resignation of Councilman Cucci from his position as Chairman of the Bus Department Committee, effective immediately, be accepted, and that, in the future, if agreeable with the other members of the Council, all matters pertaining to the Bus Lines be handled by the Council as a whole, rather than having a chairman of the committee. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried, there being no audible vote by Councilmen Cucci and Powell.

Councilman Powell commented that it was immaterial to him whether he is given authority to handle these matters or not, because, at the proper time, he said, he would be heard from.

Mayor Tolson asked Engineer Jain to report relative to the request of Pueblo Center that street lighting be provided in the vicinity of the 203rd Street Teen Age Club.

Engineer Jain said it would be a comparatively simple matter to provide the necessary lights, as, he said, the power lines are already there, and it only involves placing the poles in proper positions by the Edison Company. He advised that the charge per month for street lights is approximately \$5.50.

After a short discussion relative to number of lights needed, Councilman Gilbert moved, upon recommendation of Engineer Jain, that not to exceed four (4) street lights be installed in the vicinity of the Teen Age Club in Pueblo per request. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci, Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Gilbert reported that an unusual number of street light globes are being broken by youngsters, according to Mr. Webb, Acting City Electrician. He suggested that Chief Stroh appeal to the high school students to discontinue this willful destruction of public property.

Engineer Jain confirmed this report, advising that the City has abandoned hope of keeping street lights on Torrance Boulevard, stating that the globes are destroyed almost as soon as they are put up.

Chief Stroh agreed that this situation is alarming, but pointed out that it is impossible for a police officer to be posted on every corner to watch. He said he thought the public should be encouraged to report these matters to the police department immediately they happen in order that the culprits may be apprehended.

Councilman Powell asked what progress had been made relative to the survey made in connection with street lighting for the Park Knolls Tract. Engineer Jain advised that it has been referred to the Edison Company, who will undoubtedly render a report at the earliest possible date.

Councilman Powell then asked what had been done toward estimating the job of re-constructing the sidewalks in the Park Knolls Tract to do away with the driveways, which were constructed from the front property line, and later, garages built with their entrances from the rear of the houses. Engineer Jain said that, to do the job manually would cost an exorbitant amount, but that there is being constructed a machine which can do the job easily and at much less outlay of funds, which, he said, he would suggest using for this job.

Mayor Tolson moved that an appropriation of \$225.00 be made for 1946 membership in the League of California Cities. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci, Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Hitchcock asked Engineer Jain whether or not he had contacted any firm or individual as yet to revise the property ownership records kept in the Engineering Department, Engineer Jain's reply being in the negative.

Engineer Jain reported that, in connection with the request made by the International Derrick and Equipment Company that Oak Street be closed, which has been referred to the Planning Commission, the matter

has been delayed with the hope that IDECO might construct their new building in some manner which will eliminate necessity of closing the street. He said the Navy Depot has closed the other adjoining streets, and that, if Oak Street is also closed, the means of entry and egress will be closed to other property owners. From the standpoint of street planning, and in the interest of industry, he said, it might become necessary to recommend against closing Oak Street unless some other solution to the problem is arrived at.

A discussion followed, various ideas being advanced for remedying the situation, but nothing was decided upon. Engineer Jain requested careful study of this matter.

Engineer Jain reported another unsatisfactory matter in connection with the Navy Depot, being the subject of drainage. He said the Navy Depot had constructed their drainage system in such a manner that all the water is dumped at the rear of the high school and elementary school, and that, after the last rain, the grounds of both schools had been inundated for an unusual length of time. He asked for study of this problem.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Alden Smith, a businessman, whose place of business is at 1503 Cabrillo Avenue, addressed the Council relative to the taxicab congestion at the corner of Cabrillo Avenue and Sartori Avenue.

Councilman Hitchcock advised that there is a taxicab ordinance almost ready for introduction at this time, which has been under discussion for some time. He said it will probably come up at the next meeting, and that it is hoped the taxicab business will be regulated in every regard by this ordinance.

Mr. Smith continued by saying that the corner of Sartori and Cabrillo is being used as a "hot spot" by the various taxicab companies in the City of Torrance, to the extent that the businessmen in the vicinity cannot park their own cars in front of their places of business. He said he had made the acquaintance of a number of the cab drivers with the thought that an amicable agreement might be reached and with no injured feelings. However, he said, he had been told, in effect, to mind his own business and was threatened with bodily harm if he parked his car in front of his place of business, as it interfered with the taxicab parking space. He said there are usually from 3 to 6 cabs parked there.

He pointed out that, although he felt sure the Council did not want to foster a bunch of hoodlums, the situation can very readily get out of hand and cause a great deal of trouble. He asked that the cabs be regulated so far as parking is concerned, and that the cab drivers be required to give written receipts to patrons.

He added that, while he was stationed at Fort Sill in Oklahoma, while in the Army, he had read of the taxicab problem in Torrance and had, out of interest, looked into the methods used there and found that the taxicabs had been ruled off the streets entirely, and were required to have their own places of business from which to operate. As a result, he continued, the taxicab business was operated smoothly and without complaint, so far as he knew. He appealed to the Council to give this matter careful consideration.

Councilman Hitchcock again called attention to the ordinance which will probably be introduced at the next meeting, whereby the taxicab business will be regulated and eliminate the various complaints which have been received.

Councilman Gilbert moved all bills properly audited be paid. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci, Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Mr. Harold Callihan, a Bus Driver, who entered the meeting late, asked Councilman Cucci for a public explanation of why, since the time the position of Dispatcher was created for the Bus Lines, more gasoline had been used by the busses than prior to that time, when he, Councilman Cucci, had inferred at the time the job was created that the bus drivers were "doing all right by themselves so far as the gas was concerned".

Mayor Tolson replied that this is a subject which can be discussed indefinitely without arriving at anything, and ended the discussion immediately.

At 9:25 P.M., upon motion of Councilman Gilbert, seconded by Councilman Hitchcock, the meeting adjourned.

A. H. B. Bandler
CITY CLERK OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE

APPROVED:

W. H. Tolson
MAYOR OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE